

Xuan Pu

May 18, 2025

Chairwoman Abrams, Vice Chair Miller, Ranking Member Thomas, and other honorable members of the House Public Safety Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony on HB 1.

My name is Xuan Pu, and I am a resident of Mayfield Heights, Ohio. I moved to Cleveland in 2019 after graduating from the University of Minnesota to begin my career at the Cleveland Clinic. Before becoming a homeowner, I had to move frequently—nearly every year—from one apartment to another. Being able to own a home has allowed me to truly settle down and laid the foundation for starting a family here in Ohio.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 1 (HB 1).

This bill restricts individuals from owning property within 25 miles of a military base or critical infrastructure facility. The definition of “critical infrastructure” is so broad that it effectively covers nearly all areas of Ohio. As a result, individuals from so-called “adversary nations” would be virtually banned from owning property anywhere in the state.

This restriction violates principles of fairness and raises serious constitutional concerns. HB 1 does not distinguish between foreign governments and individuals. Many immigrants—myself included—come to the U.S. legally through a rigorous visa process to work, contribute, and build a life here. Equating our presence with national security threats is unjust and unfounded. There are more precise and effective ways to address legitimate security concerns without resorting to broad, discriminatory bans.

As others have said: “Security concerns should be handled by national security agencies, not by blanket bans based on country of origin.” Furthermore, similar laws in other states (e.g., Florida) have already triggered lawsuits on constitutional grounds, especially under the Equal Protection Clause and the Fourteenth Amendment. “Ohio should not waste taxpayer money defending a law that is likely to be overturned in court.”

HB 1 would have harmful effects not only on individuals and families, but also on Ohio’s economy. It would discourage skilled immigrants from settling here and could drive away those who have already made Ohio their home. It also sends a deeply unwelcoming message—not just to people from the listed countries, but to all immigrants—by implying that our backgrounds alone make us untrustworthy or unworthy of homeownership.

Legal immigrants on visas and green cards pay property taxes, income taxes, and sales taxes, just like citizens. Yet HB 1 essentially tells us that we are not allowed to invest in the very communities we help fund.

Furthermore, even U.S. citizens of Asian descent could be negatively affected, as the bill may encourage racial profiling and housing discrimination. Reports from Florida and Texas have already documented such consequences following the passage of similar laws.

HB 1 is not just a misguided policy—it is a harmful one. I urge you to oppose this bill and to uphold the values of fairness, equality, and opportunity that define the best of Ohio.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Xuan Pu